



2020 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FORM:

Pastor identified as possessing the gifts for the office of

BISHOP OF THE SIERRA PACIFIC SYNOD

1. Name:

2. Current Position:

3. Congregational Membership:

4. Date of Birth:

5. Date and Year of Ordination:

6. Previous Positions:

Associate Pastor, Advent Lutheran Church, Citrus Heights, CA 2008 - 2011
Teaching Assistant, Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, Berkeley, CA 2003- 2011
Assistant Athletic Trainer / Instructor, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 1994-2002
Graduate Assistant Athletic Trainer, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 1992-1994

7. Education and Earned Degrees (with institutions and years, most recent first):

Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA; MA in Liturgical Studies, 2009
Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, Berkeley, CA; MDiv, 2006
University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS; MSe in Kinesiology & Exercise Physiology, 2001
University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND; BS in Athletic Training, 1992

8. List up to three (3) current or past synod or churchwide experiences that would inform your service as bishop of this synod.

Above all, my 8+ years of experience as an Assistant to the Bishop will inform my work. The knowledge and experience I would carry forward would be a plus. And, I say that knowing that the shift from the co-pilot's to pilot's seat would be an adjustment with a steep learning curve. Second, my work with the ELCA Churchwide Assembly worship teams in 2016 and 2019 have connected me to a broad vision of the church, the hopefulness and fun of gathering and worshipping together, the power of communal prayer and the sharing of the sacraments. Third, a recent continuing education experience - an ELCA Hispanic Ministry Immersion in Austin, TX. In that class I interacted with seminary students, lay people, pastors, professors and dance teachers. We dug into language, spirituality, culture, music and dance. That time renewed my appreciation for how relationship with others can broaden my own understanding of, and experience with, God.

9. List up to three (3) current or past community activities that would inform your service as bishop of this synod.

My involvement with St. Mark's LC in San Francisco and St. John's LC in Sacramento. In both places where I have been blessed to be a member, I have been involved to my capacity - in worship leadership, youth and children's ministry, book club, and short term committees. The experience of being a 'regular' church member again has taught me a lot. I recently have been trained to help with Asylum Workshops in Sacramento where asylum seekers can come to get help with paperwork and process ahead of their court dates. I have yet to work at a workshop, but the training where 60+ people attended to lend their time and gifts to help others was enlightening and encouraging.

10. What gifts would you bring to the office of bishop of this synod? (1,000 characters maximum)

First and foremost I love Jesus, and the love I experience from God through Jesus enables me to better love the world and the people that Jesus loves. I have a healthy sense of self, and the ability to laugh at myself and with others. I seek to find joy in the world, in my relationships with others, and in my work. I am graced with a brain that retains details and can keep multiple balls in the air. I speak directly. I believe that being clear with information and boundaries is kind, loving, and essential. I am excited for the opportunity to develop new, and deepen already standing, relationships: in the ELCA conference of bishops; with ecumenical and interfaith partners; and with siblings in Christ around the world. I have a wide and deep web of friends and family that support me, bolster me, and love me. I am intentional about spending time with them and tending those relationships, as well as time with God and with myself. I am honest, authentic, and able to be vulnerable.

11. Describe your leadership style. (1,000 characters maximum)

I am collaborative, consistent, and available. In staff supervision, I trust others to do their work, and am intentionally available for questions and guidance. On a 'larger field' I generally have a vision of the experience I would like people to have, and then work with a team to make that vision a reality. I can function as the vision-holder, big picture person, as well as one of the people in the gritty details of the work. Through observation and conversation I help people identify their gifts, and help to plug them into roles and ministries where they will thrive. I am honest, warm, and genuine in my approach with others. I am willing and able to speak the 'hard truths' in the room, but always with the intention to build up the community and further the work of the Reign of God, and not out of an intention to shame or belittle others.

12. Describe your discernment process in being open to serving as bishop of this synod. (1,000 characters maximum)

My discernment process taken place over a number of years. Colleagues, friends, and mentors have encouraged me to imagine myself in the role of bishop. Through prayer, conversation, spiritual direction, learning, and experiences, I have grown to see in myself the gifts that others named, be clear in the gifts I identified in myself, and in both cases how those gifts and skills intersect with the work of a synodical bishop. In the past year, as the 2020 Synod Assembly and the election for bishop has approached, I have spent more time in reflection, conversation, and prayer. With a healthy sense of fear and trepidation, excitement about what might be, and the support and encouragement of a variety of people in my life, I have decided to be open to the possibility of this call, and to move forward into this process, trusting in the work of the Spirit and the discernment of the Assembly.

13. What do you see as the principal challenge to this synod in the next six (6) years, and how would you address it? (1,000 characters maximum)

One of the biggest challenges this synod faces is also a great opportunity. Congregations and leaders- lay and rostered- feel isolated. Sometimes this is expressed in “going it alone”, and sometimes it manifests in a competitive spirit. I think the opportunity is to commit to being together in this work of Christian discipleship. Life, and life as a disciple of Jesus can be hard. People are yearning to be supported and connected. I would love to see the ministries and people in our synod have opportunities to deepen their spiritual lives, find support and inspiration, share joys and sorrows, and experience community in new and varied ways. The Office of the Bishop could lead the way in gathering diverse planning and leadership teams that include synod council, deans, discipling teams and many others that dream, plan and execute opportunities for these connections to happen. Everyone’s job would be to support, attend, and engage in the events, opportunities, and work.

14. What are your top 3 priorities for this synod? (1,000 characters maximum)

My top three priorities are 1) helping ministries become clear on their mission and vision. Once these are clear, leaders and members can make better mission-focused decisions and plans; 2) helping ministries and their people grown in their understanding of, and work on white privilege, cultural competency, anti-racism, homo/transphobia, ableism, sexism, and all of the ways we humans find to “other” our neighbors, near and far; 3) working with the synod council and others to assess and grow the resources – financial, human and other – of the synod in order to accomplish these goals and the other goals and work of the Office of the Bishop and the synod at large. In times of scarcity thinking and diminishing resources for congregations, ministries, and synods, creative thinking, imagination, and experimentation will be needed moving forward. I don’t have the magic sauce to fix it, but a commitment to be in the conversation and work together.

Please submit the completed 2020 Biographical Information Form along with a digital photo by emailing the Sierra Pacific Synod Nominating Committee at nominations@spselca.org no later than February 1, 2020. Forms will be posted publicly on the Sierra Pacific Synod website (www.spselca.org) in spring 2020 six weeks prior to the Synod Assembly.

